

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BUKAVU PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:CASC (SMUTS, BARBARA AND KENNETH STEVE SMITH AND
CARRIE HUNTER)

SUBJECT: W/W: THREE KIDNAPPED AMCITS: DEPT MAY 22 NOON
PRESS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE DURING DEPARTMENT'S MAY 22
NOON PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. MAY WE ASK ABOUT TANZANIA NOW? DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING
NEW OR HOPEFUL?

A. FIRST, THE REASON I WAS LATE: I WAS TRYING TO CONFIRM
A WIRE SERVICE REPORT FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY, WHICH
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REPORTED THAT THE TANZANIAN POLICE HAVE ARRESTED A SUSPECT

AND THAT THERE WAS HOPE THAT THE STUDENTS WILL BE RELEASED. IT QUOTED A STANFORD PROFESSOR DAVID HAMBURG. LET ME JUST SAY THAT I CHECKED WITH OUR BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, AND WE'VE RECEIVED NO CONFIRMATION OR REPORT FROM OUR EMBASSY IN DAR ES SALAAM.

I'M NOT ADDING THAT TO SUGGEST THAT THIS REPORT ISN'T CORRECT. IT'S JUST THAT WE DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION. BEFORE I SAW THIS REPORT, THE LATEST INFORMATION I HAD IS THAT WE STILL DIDN'T KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS, MOTIVE, NUMBER OR IDENTITY OF THE KIDNAPPERS --THAT THE TANZANIAN

GOVERNMENT WAS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN TRYING TO LOCATE THEM -- THAT THEY HAD ASKED THE GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE, BURUNDI AND ZAMBIA TO COOPERATE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF TANZANIA -- FOREIGN MINISTER MALECEL A -- HAD EXPRESSED HIS DEEP CONCERN AND REGRETS OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO OUR AMBASSADOR -- AMBASSADOR CARTER; AND AMBASSADOR CARTER HAS INFORMED US THAT HE'S BEEN PERSONALLY IN TOUCH WITH THE KIGOMA REGIONAL COMMISSIONER, THE AREA IN WHICH GOMBE IS LOCATED, TO BE CERTAIN THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS BEING DONE.

THE DEPARTMENT HAS INSTRUCTED OUR EMBASSIES IN KINSHASA, ZAIRE, AND BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI, TO APPROACH THE GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE AND BURUNDI TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION IN THE SEARCH.

AND, FINALLY, THE DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO DIRECTED THAT LEWIS MACFARLANE, THE AMERICAN CONSUL IN ZANZIBAR, AND HAL LUCIUS, THE ECONOMIC OFFICER AT OUR EMBASSY IN DAR ES SALAAM, TO PROCEED TO KIGOMA TO ASSIST IN THE SEARCH. THEY ARRIVED THIS MORNING. BOTH THESE OFFICERS HAVE HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN AFRICA.

Q. BOB, WHAT ARE THEY TO DO?

A. WE DON'T HAVE ANY EMBASSY OFFICERS IN THAT AREA, AND THEY ARE OUT TO ASSIST IN WHATEVER WAY THEY CAN WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

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Q. WHERE -- IN KIGOMA?

A. IN KIGOMA. YES, SIR.

Q. BOB, DO WE HAVE ANY WORD AT ALL AS TO WHETHER THESE KIDNAPPERS BELONG TO ANY GUERRILLA FORCE OR SEMI-PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION?

A. NO. THERE'S BEEN SPECULATION IN THE PRESS AS TO THEIR IDENTITY, AND I'VE SEEN THAT. BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION FROM THE TANZANIAN AUTHORITIES AS TO THEIR IDENTITY.

Q. WELL, BOB, ONE OF THE MOTHERS SAID SHE WAS TOLD BY SOMEONE AT THAT BASE, THAT CAMP, THAT THERE WERE 40 MEN INVOLVED, THEY WERE IN UNIFORM, AND ONE OF THEM SAID THEY WERE FROM ZAIRE.

A. I DON'T HAVE CONFIRMATION OF THAT REPORT, JIM. INGERSOLL

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